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ABSTRACT

This program, included in "Effective Reading Programs...," serves 250 students a year at a small-town junior college. The first- and second-year college students, primarily white, are from families earning between $6,000 and $15,000 annually. The program began in 1964 and offers two elective college reading courses that are open to college students and community adults. Minicourses in reading are also available for special-interest groups such as practical nursing majors, accelerated high school students, and local teachers. The beginning course includes an initial diagnosis of the student's skills using standardized and informal tests. With the help of the teacher, each student develops a plan for improvement using the instructional materials and machines in the reading lab. The courses are organized to meet formally twice a week for a combination of lectures, discussions, and individual work. Discussions and lectures cover such topics as the structure and functions of sentences, how to deal effectively with the reading in a specific type of course, and useful techniques in taking exams. A third hour per week is devoted exclusively to individual lab work. (RB/AIR)

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A HANDBOOK FOR READING IMPROVEMENT

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INTRODUCTION

Young people entering college generally consider themselves to be good readers. Yet with the first typical college assignment--fifty pages of history, thirty pages of psychology, a short story, and a science chapter--many are jolted into the realization that their reading skills are not adequate to handle the demands. At this point in their education, what can they do?

Northeastern Junior College has developed a program to help students replace poor reading habits with effective skills. The basic premises of the program are:

1. Anyone can improve his reading with determination, guidance, and practice.
2. Students should progress at their own rate using materials suitable for their individual needs.
3. The skills gained in a reading class must be incorporated into other classes and reading situations.

The Reading Improvement I classes begin with an attempt to appraise the student's reading position, his areas of weakness, and the poor habits he has established. Basic facts concerning reading are highly significant to an understanding of one's total complex of reading skills. For example, few students realize that the reading process is developed continuously. The child learns to recognize words early in his school career. Yet he cannot stop there. His ability to comprehend and interpret must grow as progressively as his knowledge of math or science. As he develops reading skills from his school experiences, his leisure and required reading, and his individual responses to society, the overall picture of his reading will become unique. He must sometime learn that each type of reading is discrete, requiring a particular method to suit content and purpose. If he does not

learn this, he will be floundering along, trying to read all his material at the same speed and in the same manner. A popular misconception is that faster reading alone will improve reading abilities. But efficient reading skills are not acquired automatically. Some help is usually required. Therefore the classes at Northeastern Junior College are open in enrollment, allowing the student who recognizes a need for help to participate. Students are also recommended for enrollment through school counseling and advising services.

Reading Improvement II attempts to follow up and refine the skills emphasized in Reading I. Some re-evaluation is necessary at the beginning of the course, but very quickly the teacher and students develop plans for each student according to his individual needs and abilities.

As the student begins his self analysis in Reading I through tests, study, and conferences, he is encouraged to consider these basic facts and to appraise himself. No one can better understand the problems which exist than the student himself when he is made aware of poor habits and then instructed in methods and varied purposes in reading. Some time is devoted in class to exploring the reasons why people read. Often students can recognize the goals of a richer and more meaningful life through reading about past cultures and fine contemporary elements. Usually after some thought they will suggest that reading can broaden vision, develop social understandings, and guide in the search for truth. As a very personal significance, students can be shown that reading helps people meet the practical needs of life and provides therapeutic values in discovering another's solution to a problem that the student himself has.

The most common poor reading habits are introduced early in the classes. Correction is often rapid in the habits of vocalizing (trying to voice each

word), finger following, and head swinging. Planned lessons can greatly improve the problems of regressing (rereading or glancing back), word by word reading, limited eye span, clue blindness, and the same speed for all material.

Following the analysis period, the classes investigate recommended reading methods and efficient study skills; then begin taking constructive steps toward improvement. General principles in a reading class follow sound educational practice with strong emphasis on motivation. Each student is directed to material on a level he can handle well, then encouraged to progress to more difficult work. Interest and effort are stimulated since the student has choice of materials within his program and the responsibility of keeping his own progress records. Individualized programs are necessary and yet each must be systematic, always challenging the student to improve.

Speeds are considered early in the first quarter. Since it is vital to establish a purpose for reading of any type, students are taught the difference between skimming (to get a rapid, general impression or an idea of the organization or scope) scanning (a search for the location of information, the answer to a question, etc.) critical reading (to understand clearly the very complex organizations, connotative suggestions, processes of reasoning, etc.) and careful rapid reading (to note facts and specific details, to comprehend overall meaning, sequence, climactic order, etc.). Increases in speed are then governed by purpose and comprehension. College students must read faster than 500 words per minute (in the careful rapid reading attack) to keep up with the mass of material they encounter, yet their comprehension test level should not fall below 70 or 80 percent.

To pace the students in these types of reading, the NJC lab offers a variety of books and machines. Books range from lab manuals by Paul Witty,

Marvin D. Glock, Paul D. Leedy, Walter S. Guiter and others to paperbacks of many types--current light fiction to classics.

Six types of machines are available so that any student may find one or more that may aid him. While the machines differ in operation, they all basically stimulate concentration, discrimination, perception, faster thinking, and speeds.

The shadowscope is a versatile and popular machine using a moving lighted area to stimulate regular speed, eliminate regressions, and broaden eye span in addition to the general benefits. The Reading Accelerator is similar in concept but employs a moving panel. The Controlled Reader Jr. is a machine which projects filmstrip-type material on small screens within individual lab stations, revealing a line of print at a time either fully or with a shadowed area to guide directional attack and establish rhythm of eye movements. The Skimmer-Scanner uses timing by seconds and a bead of light to pace the student for various skimming purposes.

Some group work is done with the Tachistascope and Controlled Reader. The Tachistascope develops acuity, concentration and visual memory to a high degree. Numbers, symbols, words or phrases are projected on a screen for a half, fourth, tenth, or hundredth of a second. The Controlled Reader projects filmstrip materials on a large screen in the same manner as the Controlled Reader, Jr.

Students usually progress rapidly when paced by the machines in a planned sequence of lessons. Their interest and attention seem to be maintained to a high degree because of the quietness of the room and the individuality of the programing. Concentration improves measurably. One obvious benefit the students carry away is the power to incorporate their newly acquired skills into other areas of study. Students consistently list

the following ideas as the most valuable to them:

1. The attitude the reader brings to the written word must be considered since bias, prejudice, moral condemnations can definitely influence comprehension and interpretation.

2. Concentration and interest must be sought. If the student knows some basic suggestions for stimulating interest, he can apply much material to his own life.

3. A previe:' skimming of material to be covered aids both speed and comp:'hension. Overall structure, scope, difficulty, and relationships can make the difference between placing the material in its proper perspective or seeing it as a tangle of ideas.

4. Typographical clues must be studied to show relative size, importance, sequence, etc.

5. Self-questioning and critical evaluation are invaluable for retention.

6. Using short cuts, such as key words, punctuation, paragraph structure, etc., saves much time.

7. Reading must be done in thought units.

8. A continuity of communication must be maintained with little regressing.

9. Reading is a pleasure.

Another valuable result of the program thus far has been rather an intangible factor. It might be termed an increase in self-confidence or self-assurance. Or perhaps it is just realizing for the first time that a wide, wonderful world is available to him who reads, and that a man is really free if he can release himself in time and space through reading. The students cannot resolve in words this new feeling; neither can the instructor. It is there, nevertheless, and in the long run, may prove to be the true value of a reading program.

CHAPTER I: ATTITUDES TOWARD READING

The word "reading" brings a quick response from most people. Some recall endless, miserable school days with reading assignment on top of reading assignment. Others envision a kaleidoscope of experiences and knowledge just waiting for the reader to lose himself in its marvelous hues. Then, of course, there are practical readers. "I read what I have to" they will say, fe ling a martyrdom as they bravely march on to the next page.

Nearly everyone has a definite attitude toward his own reading. But whatever personal feelings may exist, very few Americans will deny the importance of reading in our civilization. The masses of material published each day tell us that more and more is being presented to the public as necessary reading matter. The knowledgeable citizen today realizes that he must read books, newspapers, and periodicals to keep informed on a variety of items, from world political happenings to new "groups" in the pop recording industry.

Students realize the need for rapid comprehensive reading in order to handle in one night thirty pages of literature, two chapters of history, an explanation of a science process, etc. And, of course, teachers must read continually to learn new techniques and data to present to their ever better prepared students.

But, what about the business and professional worlds? Consider the reading necessary for anyone concerned with medicine, home and business products, transportation, communication, exploration, government, or public relations. So much is happening, changing, being discovered or improved today that these people must read in order to do their job well, or, in some cases, just to keep their job.

The first step then in improving your own reading is to ask yourself these questions:

1. What is my attitude toward reading?
2. Why do I feel this way?
3. Do I realize the importance of reading?
4. What can I do to improve my own attitudes?

In answering question four, try these suggestions:

1. Accept the fact that reading is important in your own life.
2. Realize that you must develop a positive attitude toward reading.
3. Decide to develop good attitudes as you develop effective skills.
4. Determine to practice your new reading skills whenever they can be applied in reading situations.

CHAPTER II: A PERSONAL INVENTORY

A. HABITS

Habits are strongly established patterns and are generally very difficult to change. Your reading habits were not developed overnight. They evolved through many years, adapting, changing, and growing as your needs, experiences, instructors, and associations changed.

You may remember that when you were very interested in a subject, the reading associated with it was exciting and pleasurable. So you read everything you could on that subject. And perhaps you remember times when reading did not seem important--you were busy learning to play an electric guitar or football or how to tease your hair into a new style. During these periods your reading development slowed down. You may even have become a poorer reader.

Reading is a continuous process with steps like those of a stairway. In the primary grades, you learned to recognize words and associate them with pictures, people, things. Then you began to comprehend. Words became meaningful as you learned dictionary definitions and how words fit together to present a message. Comprehension takes many forms and varies in complexity. Thus, more difficult material was presented to you as you advanced in school and you had to learn how to handle it. You picked up some good habits and probably some bad ones. These then are the first two steps in reading:

1. Word recognition
2. Comprehension

Many people believe that this is all. The general public speaks in terms of "speed and comprehension." Yet there are two more very important steps that a good reader must take:

3. Interpretation
4. Assimilation

Interpretation means understanding the meaning behind words as to the writer's message, both explicit and suggestive. This includes "reading between the lines" and realizing what the writer could not quite get into words or else wanted you to draw out for yourself. Interpretation is a nebulous factor, varying from person to person and even from time to time in the same person. Good writers generally allow readers to relate what they are reading to their own experience. So a passage will mean more to one person because of something applicable in his life at that time.

Students commonly complain to teachers (especially literature teachers) that they cannot see the same meaning as the teacher or other students. This is a problem in interpretation. These students have learned to comprehend but they cannot take that next step and interpret.

The final step assimilation grows out of interpretation. It is the process of really becoming involved with the written material. It is being able to say in your own words, with your own understanding, what a written passage means. Many students seem afraid to do this. They cling tenaciously to textbooks or teacher phrasing. Their notes are taken in this wording and they study from it. If their assimilation is not strong (and this is difficult when using someone else's words) the notes can become meaningless.

Thus the full cycle of reading involves word recognition, comprehension, interpretation, and assimilation. Only after you have completed this cycle can you say that you have truly read.

B. CHECKLIST

The student who expects to read adequately at the Junior College level should have developed quite a few skills. If you have not mastered these, you must pick them up or suffer in your classwork. Study the following checklist, asking yourself how proficient you are at each item.

READING AND STUDY SKILLS NECESSARY FOR THE STUDENT AT JUNIOR COLLEGE LEVEL

I. Recognition

A. Recognition of 50,000 words

B. Sight words

C. Use of structure clues
1. Roots
2. Prefixes
3. Suffixes
4. Grammatical usage

D. Dictionary use

E. Thesaurus use

F. Ability to use context clues as principal method of word study
1. Clues from adjacent words
2. Reference to previous text containing the word

II. Comprehension

A. Denotative meanings: direct specific meaning as distinct from additional suggestion

B. Connotative meanings: The conveying or suggesting of a meaning apart from what it explicitly names or describes
1. Particular meaning in a specific combination of words
2. Flexibility in admitting new word uses
3. Shades and degree of meanings

C. Knowledge of Structure
1. Sentences
2. Paragraphs
a. Topic sentences
b. Subordinate sentences
(1) Examples
(2) Comparisons
(3) Contrasts
(4) Repetition
(5) Justification
c. Dud sentences

3. Chapters
   a. Physical form
      (1) Headings, sub-headings
      (2) Print sizes
      (3) Organization
      (4) Visual aids
   b. Author's style
   c. Topic limitations
   d. Emphasis and proportion

4. Books
   a. Physical form
      (1) Title page information
      (2) Table of contents
      (3) Preface
      (4) Index
      (5) Organization
   b. Author's style
   c. Topic coverage
   d. Emphasis and proportion

D. Understanding of organizations
   1. Cause and effect
   2. Effect to cause
   3. Climactic
   4. Familiarity
   5. Special
   6. Chronological
   7. Acceptability
   8. Logical

E. Visual Aids
   1. Relationships
   2. Proportion
   3. Correlations with figures
   4. Significance to material
   5. Criticism
      a. Entire picture?
      b. Representative?
      c. Current?
      d. Authoritative?

III. Interpretation

A. Author's purpose

B. Author's attitude

C. Bias or prejudice

D. Dominant tone

E. Overall effect

F. Symbolization

G. Universality

H. Appeals
   1. Emotional
   2. Intellectual

I. Ability to
   1. Infer
      a. From choice
      b. From selection of details
   2. Conclude
   3. Analyze
      a. Must be objective
      b. Must have basis
   4. Criticize
      a. Sincere
      b. Basis and procfs
   5. Adapt
      a. Contemporary thought
      b. Modern parallels
      c. Personal implications

IV. Study Skills

A. Understand and follow directions

B. Preview skim material for best possible comprehension and retention
   1. Read introduction
   2. Read headings and subheadings
   3. Read topic sentences and provide headings
   4. Read conclusion

C. Establish questions to be answered in further reading

D. Read carefully for facts and answers

E. Review skim

F. Overview skim

G. Scan for specific information

H. Test self

I. Differentiate between
   1. Main points--supporting details
   2. Pertinent facts--irrelevant facts

J. Summarize

K. Outline

C. COMMON READING PROBLEMS

Reading is a skill, and like other skills, such as swimming or golfing, it can be improved to a higher and higher degree of proficiency. Setting the highest level of reading is like saying that the 3.52 minute mile is the best--track records are constantly being broken, as are records in swimming, auto racing, and basketball. Since reading is also a skill, it requires practice--constant application. A variety of materials must be read to help the reader's flexibility. He should read essays, short stories, novels, treatises, newspapers, magazines, and, yes, even the comics offer interesting views of the contemporary scene.

Just as the athlete must work to eliminate movements that hamper his golfing, swimming, or running, so the reader must analyze his poor techniques and try to improve them. Many common reading problems are easy to recognize. You should be able to spot some of your own problems in the following list and begin working on them today.

READING PROBLEMS	METHODS OF CORRECTION
1. Long Fixations A fixation is when you have actually focused on a word or spot. Your eyes are still and you are reading. (Contrary to popular thought, reading occurs only during these fixations, not when eyes are moving across a page.)	1. If your fixations are too long, you are losing valuable time, thus cutting down your rate. So you must practice on cutting down the time it takes to grasp the printed words accurately. The tachistascope is the best machine to help this. It regulates how much time you can spend on a fixation. You can practice on your own by bringing a card down a page rapidly, forcing yourself to hurry.
2. Small Eye Span The eye span is how many words or letters you can see accurately in one fixation.	2. You can broaden eye span in several ways: a. Practice focusing on only two spots on a column. Move down the page quickly, establishing a rhythmic pattern. (At first you will miss words, but keep trying.)

2. (continued)

b. Machines such as the Controlled Reader, Tachistascope and Shadowscope will force you to handle more words at a time.

c. You can make a simple device using an index card. Cut out a rectangle in the middle about ¼ inch high and 1½ inches wide. Use this on any book and learn to grasp all the words that appe in the slot in one glance. Ther you can enlarge the opening as you improve.

d. Practice is probably the most effective way to broaden eye span. Read as much as possible. Be sure that some of your reading is light, pleasant material. As you become involved with an enjoyable topic, you should begi to move through it more rapidly, seeing more with each fixation.

3. Poor Directional Attack

You need a smooth reading pattern from left to right, then a smooth return sweep to the next line of print.

3. Machines such as the Controlled Reader and Shadowscope will help this. Also you can practice by just running a card down your page at a regular rhythm.

4. Regressions

Whenever you look back at a word or even skip back to a previous line, you are regressing. All readers regress somewhat, but too many regressions cause you:

a. to lose time
b. to lose the train of thought

4. a. Machines such as the Controlled Reader and Tachistascope are excellent to help remedy this problem. Also moving a card down the page will help.

b. Concentration will also help eliminate regressions. As you are better able to focus your entire attention on the reading, you do not feel that you have missed an idea. Thus, you are not tempted to regress as much.

5. Word-by-Word Reading

Our language is constructed in phrases, so you must not just jump from one word to the next without seeing the relationship.

5. Practice breaking down a reading passage into meaningful groups. (They don't always have to be according to grammar rules!)

6. Vocalization This is an attempt to say each word as you read. Try this test--rest the back of your fingers lightly on your lips while you are reading silently. There should be no movement. Then rest your fingertips on your throat while you are reading. There should be no vibration.	6. Pushing yourself with or without machines is a good remedy. You do not have time to form these words. Also, try chewing a big wad of gum and keeping your mouth closed when you read.
7. Word Blocking This is stopping each time you meet an unfamiliar word. This can break the continuity of thought.	7. Do not decide to look up every word in the dictionary. Many can be understood because of the words around them. (See Chapter IV for suggestions on vocabulary improvements.) Go ahead with your reading, trying to understand the thought. Later you can look up the word if it is important.
8. Number Attraction Do numbers fascinate you to the extent that you forget the idea you are reading?	8. Generalize numbers as a rule--round them off since you are trying to get the idea. You can always return if the number is significant.
9. Finger Following This refers to the use of the finger to pace your reading.	9. In skimming, the finger can often be a help, but remember your eyes should move faster than you finger can. Do not use it.
10. Head Swinging Rotating your head back and forth across a page as you read. This is tiring and unnecessary.	10. Hold your head still! Let the eyes move across the line of print.
11. Clue Blindness Ignoring headings, italics, outlining, spacing, and the other typographical aids the author has included to help you comprehend better.	11. Notice all typographical clues--outlining, capital letter headings, italics, etc. Question their purpose and value to the selection. Use them as guides.

12. Same Pace for All Reading

This certainly is a problem for many. Different types of reading material requires different methods and rates. A good reader should be able to skim, to read in a rapid comprehensive manner, to scan, and to read critically and analytically.

12. Learn to regulate your pace according to what you want from the material. For example, if you desire main ideas, then you need to skim. (See Chapter IV.)

13. No Real Purpose

Reading well is extremely difficult if you have not established a reason for reading. Much reading is not what you would select for pleasure reading, but it must be done. Establishing a purpose greatly helps comprehension.

13. Always establish a purpose for reading. Consider these factors:

a. Why am I reading this?

b. How can I do the best reading in the least time.

c. What do I want from this reading?

d. Begin with questions about the subject, if possible.

D. DIAGNOSIS

In addition to an analysis of reading skills, habits, and common problems, there are several other factors to be considered in a Personal Inventory of your own reading.

ORTHORATER

Do you have any eye problems? If you have not had a good eye test (other than an eye chart test) in the past six months, you should have an exam with the Orthorater. This is a visual screening device capable of indicating need for professional treatment. Also, you should consider the following questions:

1. Do your eyes get tired while you are reading?
2. Is reading hard work for you physically?
3. Does light bother your eyes?
4. Do words sometimes blur?
5. Do you get dizzy after reading?
6. Do your eyes water while you are reading?
7. Do you need to squint to see words clearly?
8. If you squint, do you do this for words at a distance or close at hand?
9. Does it take your eyes several seconds to focus when you look up from reading?

EYE MOVEMENT PHOTOGRAPHY

One of the most accurate devices to reveal your reading pattern is the Eye Movement Camera. This device actually takes a picture of your eyes' reading movements across the printed page. It will record your span, fixation times, return sweeps, regressions, regularities, and irregularities.

NELSON-DENNY TESTS

Two forms of the Nelson-Denny Reading Test will be given in Reading Improvement I, one the first week and one near the end. The test has two

sections--Vocabulary and Paragraph Analysis. It is a timed test and will be evaluated against national percentiles of freshman or sophomore rankings. Along with the previous diagnoses, this will help in selecting the correct materials for your use in the reading lab. Students in Reading Improvement II may take a third form of the Nelson-Denny test at the end of the quarter.

CHAPTER III: MACHINES AND LAB MANUALS

Several types of machines and lab manuals are available in the Reading Lab. Each differs somewhat in purpose and theory. This difference is an advantage because it enables a student to work on many facets of his reading at the same time. After your diagnosis is complete, you will work on certain machines and books according to your needs and your present level of achievement. Following is an explanation of each machine and manual together with directions for its use. Exercise sheets are provided for <u>each</u> activity. Be sure to use them. Remember, your general aim is to achieve a good comprehension level (70 to 80%), then attempt to move more rapidly through more difficult material and still maintain good comprehension.

A. MACHINES

1. <u>Tachistascope</u> This machine helps cut down fixation time and build wider eye span. It operates on a shutter principle, giving the viewer only a short time to read what is revealed. Speeds to be used are 1/4 of a second, 1/10 of a second, and 1/100 of a second. All students in Reading I will practice this for ten minutes at the beginning of each class. Reading II students may elect to use this machine for individual work.

2. <u>Flash-X</u> This is an individual Tachistascopic device. There are cardboard discs which can be slipped into the machine from the right. Locate a number within the open circle; then a word is in place. Flip the red switch and you will have 1/10 of a second to identify the word. This will encourage quick, accurate perception and even strengthen spelling, if you write the word after you identify it. Flip the white switch to check your answer.

3. Controlled Reader This machine aids the establishment of a regular reading pattern and helps eliminate regressions. A guided light is used at first so only limited words are exposed to the reader. Also, a complete line may be revealed after the reader has shown a competency of 280 words per minute.

4. Controlled Reader, Jr. This is the individualized version of the previous machine. To set the rate, multiply the number in parenthesis on the film by the setting on the dial at the back of the machine. To obtain the guided light or the full line of print, adjust the red knob on the right side of the machine. The focus adjustment is on the front end of the lens. The on-off switch is on the right side of the machine (near the back). The lab has four sets of material to accompany this machine--JI, KL, LK, and MN. The JI set is the easiest and the MN the most difficult.

5. Shadowscope This is an individual pacing machine which guides the reader at a pre-set speed and helps him establish a regular pattern and eliminate regressions. A band of light will be reflected on the book from a mirror at the top of the arm of the machine. This band of light will be about an inch wide. If you read within this lighted area, you will be maintaining the average speed at which the machine is set. Do not try to consistently read at the top or bottom of the light--just somewhere within. This machine can be used with nearly any book if you know the average number of words per inch. Locate this number on the Calibration Table in the left column. The numbers to the right are reading rates. At the top of each rate column is the machine setting. These correspond to the dial on the inside of the arm of the machine.

6. Language Master Pronunciation, vocabulary, and spelling may be aided by the use of this machine. It has a set of headphones for individual use.

The Lab has three sets of materials--basic, intermediate, advanced. Each single word card has the word's spelling, pronunciation, and variations. After studying these, run the magnetic tape at the bottom of the card through the machine from right to left. You will hear the word pronounced twice for you. You may also turn the "record" knob to "student" and say the word into the speaker. Then you may hear your own pronunciation. You might also use the word in a sentence. Do not try to erase the tape; the next person to use the machine will erase it with his voice.

7. Skimmer-Scanner This is a good machine for students having a fairly high reading level. It paces a student in skimming at 1000 words per minute. It also times scanning in terms of seconds. There are two knobs on the inside of the motor part. The one on the right turnsthe time on; the left one turns on the bead of light. Use the textbook and the workbook which accompa the machine. The workbook will help set your purpose for a given type of reading and will also instruct you in timing your work.

8. Tape Recorder The Lab contains a tape recorder and several tapes for individual student use. Most of the tapes concern listening and vocabulary skills. After you have listened to the tapes, answer the questions provided.

B. LAB MANUALS

1. How to Become a Better Reader by Paul Witty

Most students will find this book excellent for use with the Shadowscope. It contains Lessons and Selections. Use only the Selections for your lab work in Reading I. Each is about three pages long, followed by 20 comprehension questions (mostly recall questions), and 10 vocabulary words which have been used in the reading material. To set a selection for your machine, use 45 words per inch as your guide on the calibration table. Read the selection, then answer the questions which follow. Try to answer them without referring

back to the selection--this helps strengthen memory. After you have finished the questions and vocabulary words, check your own answers in the back of the book (page 267 and following). Give yourself a percentage score for both parts. The questions are worth 5% apiece and the vocabulary words are worth 10% apiece. Always record your rate at the top of the page. This book may also be used without the machine. Keep track of the time spent in reading a selection and check your rate in the back of the book. Reading II students may use the Lessons in this book, then follow with practice work in another lab manual.

2. The Improvement of College Reading by Marvin D. Glock

This lab manual is very carefully designed so that the reader knows exactly what aspect of reading he is working on. Look through the Table of Contents. Each exercise has four parts, dealing with different types of reading. Do not just read selections in order. Work on a special kind so you will strengthen it, or you may work on two or three types alone. Each selection is short and will be followed by a few questions (5 to 15). Read the selection, answer the questions, and check them in the answer booklet attached to the back page of the manual. Here you will find a number after each question, leading you to the bottom of the page. These numbers identify each question as to type--simple recall, main idea and detail, relationship, tone, vocabulary, etc.

This book may be used on the Shadowscope, using 45 words per inch as a guide for the calibration table. Or you may time your reading and check the rate in the back of the book.

3. Developmental Reading by Walter S. Guiter, Claire I. Raeth, and Merrill M. May

This book contains 37 reading selections, varying in length and subject. Study the "Contents by Topics"page to see the scope of areas covered. You may

use this book on the Shadowscope if you desire or check your rate on the time chart. The word count is 45 words per inch. After reading the selection, look for the comprehension questions, page 97 and following. Each lesson will test you on word meanings, main idea, facts contained within the selection, a variety of comprehensions, outlining, inferences, and conclusions. Answer all questions, check your answers from the answer key in the back of the book, and calculate your percentage by dividing the number possible into the number you had correct.

4. Read with Speed and Precision by Paul Leedy

This is your textbook. In addition to the theory section, you will find practice exercises beginning on page 163. Questions and answers are also located in the book. You may use this on the Shadowscope by using 75 words per inch as your guide. The reading selections in this book are more difficult than those of other lab manuals, so you will not be able to use your best rate for this work.

5. SRA Labs The Reading Lab has two sets of these materials--Lab IV A and III B. The Power Builders contain reading selections, followed by comprehension questions and vocabulary study. The booklets are color-keyed, meaning that they grow more difficult as the colors change through the series. Both the reading time and the time it takes to answer all questions must be kept by the student. He then tries to better his times and scores as he encounters more difficult material. Answer cards are included in the boxes so that the student may do his own checking. This is probably the best material in the Lab for vocabulary building. Rate Builders are short reading selections followed by comprehension questions. These must be done in three minutes. Reading II students will begin each class with two timed Rate Builder sessions. These are also color-keyed for levels of difficulty.

6. Reading for Understanding

This material is very effective in practicing critical reading. It helps in determining the central idea, and it is also very helpful in learning to read and understand test questions. There are 100 levels of difficulty, beginning with number one as the easiest. Each level has four practice cards, marked by these symbols - a circle, a diamond, a square, and a triangle. A student would select a card, read each statement, then answer one question related to what he has read. Answer booklets are provided in the back of the box. No timing is necessary unless the student wishes to practice this under a pressure situation similar to testing. In that case, he might try to answer the ten questions on one card in ten minutes or less. Students may move on to cards of more difficulty whenever their scores indicate a 70% to 80% mastery.

CHAPTER IV: SUGGESTIONS FOR SPECIFIC TYPES OF READING SITUATIONS

This chapter presents ideas to aid the student in learning better habits for activities commonly required in a college situation. The student is called upon to handle a great amount and a tremendous variety of reading matter. He is required not only to read this material and understand it well, but also to remember it well enough to perform satisfactorily on tests. Included are comments on Concentration, Note-Taking, The Reading of Tests, Vocabulary Improvement, and Skimming.

A. CONCENTRATION

"I can't seem to concentrate on material that does not interest me."

This comment is frequently voiced by students considering their reading problems. Are they experiencing some unique block that dooms their ability to read necessary information? No. Their problem is shared by countless others, if not <u>everyone</u> else. Concentration is not an inborn ability; it is learned. Some people have learned how to concentrate on any type of printed material. But many readers have not. Certainly they zip through material that deals with some topic which they enjoy or know well. But life presents us with many reading situations and they do not all fall into this category. So--<u>one must learn how to concentrate</u>.

The first thing the reader must do is get himself involved with the material He has to gain as much knowledge of the subject as possible before settling down to a thorough reading. How does he gain this knowledge? The best way is by <u>previewing</u> the material. For example, if he is attacking a chapter in a textbook, he should follow these steps:

1. Look at the title
    a. What does it mean?
    b. What is its scope?

2. Study headings and other typographical clues in large or black print.
   a. Why are they given?
   b. What division do they reveal?
   c. What is their organizational pattern?
3. Look at illustrations, maps, charts, etc.
   a. Why are they included?
   b. What do they picture?
   c. How are they related to the material?
4. Read any words or sentences in italics.
   a. Why are they set off?
   b. What do they do for the material being covered?
5. Read occasional sentences (first sentences in paragraphs are often topic sentences.)
6. Read the summary at the end of the chapter.
7. Notice the length of the chapter.

After doing these previewing steps, the reader should have a good base for his material. He should know exactly what is be discussed and to what length it is being discussed. Then he is able to involve himself by raising questions:

1. Why does the author include this idea?
2. What does this mean?
3. How will the author explain this point?

Then as the reader begins to read thoroughly, his mind searches for the answers to his questions. Concentration is stronger because he is now reading material that is familiar to him. Comprehension will also be strengthened.

Afterwards, to really solidify what he has previewed and read, the reader must review. This final step involved self-testing, either mental or written, in this manner.

1. Try to construct an outline of the author's main points.

2. Then try to recall as many details as possible that fit under each main point.
3. Summarize the material.
4. Consider how the material in this chapter fits in with the rest of the book.
   a. Look at the Table of Contents.
   b. Relate this chapter to ones previously studied.
   c. Look ahead to see where the author is taking you.

B. NOTE-TAKING

Much difficulty experienced by students on examinations can be directly traced to their method of taking notes. Effective note-taking requires alertness, some background for the subject, motivation, an ability to identify main ideas and supporting details, concentration, and the ability to hold two ideas in mind at the same time. The student must listen carefully to the lecturer, and at the same time, be involved in weighing, evaluation, and categorizing ideas. Then he must translate these ideas into his own terms, shorten to meaningful key words and phrases, and transmit these to paper.

Some preparation for good note-taking should be done before the lecture. The student should read any assigned material carefully, identifying ideas of the most significance and anticipating how material may be presented in the lecture. One good habit is to outline the assigned reading on the <u>left</u> pages of a notebook, leaving wide spaces for additions. Then, during the lecture, class notes may be taken on the right side of the notebook--opposite the outlining for that topic. Then, the student can draw readily upon definitions, explanations, etc. he had previously noted. Often, he can save repeating information he had already gained from the assigned reading.

A few practical suggestions for note-taking follow:

1. Listen carefully--be alert (often you should be listening <u>ahead</u> while writing.)

2. Try to summarize ideas.
3. Use your own words to express explanation.
4. Include important terms or phrases from the lecture. (If you cannot spell them, write them as they sound, then look them up afterwards.)
5. Do not crowd your notes. Leave spaces for addition of related ideas which may be discussed later.
6. Use an outline form. Remember, there will be very few major points. Most information will only explain major ideas.
7. Question the lecturer if ideas are not clear to you.

And a last, very important suggestion--within a day or two after taking the notes, read them over, adding words of explanation if ideas are cloudy. Remember, you may need that material for a final exam six weeks later. Notes cannot be too clear.

C. TAKING OF TESTS

One unique reading situation involves the reading of tests. Since the student is concerned with providing a correct answer, effective reading of test questions is imperative. This reading must be done rapidly, and it must call to mind the information needed.

Several basic factors are important to good test performance. These include proper rest, a high degree of concentration with a minimum of tension, a positive attitude that the student is prepared, and a strong desire to do well.

Overall previewing of a test should be the first significant step in the actual taking of a test. The student must survey the test, noting what parts are contained, the structure of questions, and the scope of information demanded. Then he can consider the relative importance of each section and budget his time, allowing more time for difficult areas. He should also consider beginning with a section he feels will be easy for him. This helps remove much of the tension prompted by the very word exam.

The student must read and follow directions. A cursory glance will often mislead him as to all points to be covered or even the major point of emphasis.

In considering the structure of questions, a valuable procedure is to skim each question noting the overall significance and scope, then to read each question carefully weighing all possible meanings. The positive or negative slant must also be clarified at this time.

True-false questions require consideration of each word in its immediate context. The degree of truth often confuses students in this type of exam unless he knows that absolute words such as all, every, always, are to be viewed with suspicion. Also he must not overlook limiting terms such as most, many, some, few. Often students are instructed not to guess at this type of question, yet the student should realize that this differs from the "educated guess" based on some significant point about which he is quite sure.

Multiple choice questions or, as students often label them, "multiple guess," usually provide a tangle of related ideas for the student to struggle through. He should read the question carefully with the intent of eliminating obviously incorrect choices first. Then he should re-read the question, coupling it with each answer for careful scrutiny.

Students often like matching questions because they accept these as puzzle entries to be crossed off then they can be fitted into place. But students should not try to "even out" their questions and answers. Structure often provides clues for the student in this type of question. Obviously he cannot match a singular answer to a question calling for a plural. Similarly, he should know not to cross nounsand adjectives, verb phrases and clauses.

The essay question still is the nemesis to many students. Lack of familiarily with this type often sets up a fear of not being able to cope with the essay situation. On the other hand, some students regard this type question as the "dumping off" place for any isolated fact they might have

dimly remembered. Seven steps seem to prove valuable:

1. Read the question carefully, considering all the parts that must be answered.
2. Organize main points mentally.
3. Outline briefly (on the test paper or back of previous page) to note relative values (subordination and parallelism).
4. Add facts as you write.
5. Avoid generalizations which you do not support by details.
6. Strive for clarity (don't assume the teacher will fill the gaps in the explanation).
7. Re-read your answer as a critic, proofreading and making essential corrections and improvements.

There is much more that one can and should do in order to succeed with tests. Keeping up with assignments, periodic reviews, concise and understandable class notes, concentrated study for two or three days before the test--all these are valuable and deserve application.

One excellent way to check how well one is prepared is to use the "outline-testing" method. With the textbook closed and no notes in sight, the student should attempt to formulate an outline of the material studied. He may do this mentally, but actually writing it re-enforces his retention. Once he has a basic outline, then he should attempt to fill in divisions and details under his headings. Working in this manner will demonstrate how well prepared he is and will very clearly show areas of weakness needing restudy.

One last suggestion concerns the memorizing of material. Certainly, in some few areas material must be learned by rote, but for most subjects, the student should learn concepts, ideas, relationships in <u>his own words</u>. If he attempts to learn some one else's words, they will be meaningless to him. So, class notes should be taken in the student's own words, with additions, of course, of significant phrases or words from the instructor.

Then the information can be drawn into the student's storehouse of knowledge, ready for him to use when the occasion demands.

D. VOCABULARY IMPROVEMENT

The expansion of one's vocabulary is not easy, nor can it be accomplished in a short time. A lasting and significant improvement in vocabulary occurs only with a definite, long-range, workable plan.

As a young person progresses from childhood to high school graduation, he is surrounded by countless opportunities for vocabulary additions. His world is full of new and exciting things--school, books of all types, friends, hobbies, the world of nature, television, newspapers, magazines. From all these he can and does learn new words--words for activities, ideas, objects, dreams, and much more. But too often this young person adopts a preference for certain terms, because they are fads, and he begins to limit his acquisition of new words. As he narrows his scope and usage, he limits his vocabulary growth. At seventeen, he knows about 50,000 words. If he has no desire for vocabulary improvement, he will not learn many more in his life-time and will probably forget many of those he had learned.

So here emerges one of the first ingredients for vocabulary growth--a desire to learn new words. This motivation should come from the student himself--he should feel a strong sense of wanting to know what has been said and is being said and will be said. He should want to experience the satisfaction of recognizing multifarious meanings of words and of flashing images suggested by well phrased ideas. As this young person feels the value and beauties of words, he begins to analyze words more carefully, asking himself where they came from or why a particular word refers to an item. In his analysis he will identify parts of words that he has met before--prefixes, suffixes, roots--and he can then determine what a word means by the parts contained.

With the close scrutiny he has given this word comes a sense of familiarity. Then he feels confident in the use of that word, and it becomes a part of him or--more exactly--his vocabulary.

Too often students will attempt vocabulary expansion by trying to memorize five words a week. This method is poor in at least two ways. For one, the word should not be memorized but, as explained in the preceding paragraph, brought into a friendly acquaintanceship. Secondly, to really know a word involves using it. A student may find the use of five new words this week, ten next week, fifteen the next, and so on, is a very difficult task. He will be able to incorporate some of the words into his speaking or writing vocabulary, but, here again, some will be preferred while others will be overlooked.

So what is a reasonable plan to improve vocabulary? It must incorporate attitudes and methods, as in the following suggestions:

1. Have a real desire for vocabulary growth.
2. Realize this growth will require time.
3. Acknowledge that a sincere interest in words must develop.
4. Become thoroughly acquainted with each new word.
    a. Study it--identify its parts.
    b. Look up its pronunciation and definitions.
    c. Consider whether the word has numerous meanings.
    d. Determine which of these meanings have value for you.
5. Use each new word both in speaking and writing.

Many vocabulary books offer systems and suggestions for the expansion of vocabulary. A person should investigate them and use them if he wishes. But realistically, no book can help the person who does not meet the requirements listed above.

GOOD COLLEGE LEVEL VOCABULARY BOOKS

Coleman C. Bender and John W. Zorn Words in Context

James I. Brown Programmed Vocabulary

Marion Marsh Brown Learning Words in Context

Nancy Davis Vocabulary Improvement

A. A. DeVitis and J. R. Warmer Words in Context

George W. Feinstein Programmed College Vocabulary 3600

Dr. Wilfred Funk and Norman Lewis Thirty Days to a More Powerful Vocabulary

Roger B. Goodman and David Lewin New Ways to Greater Word Power

Donald W. Lee Harbrace Vocabulary Guide

Norman Lewis Word Power Made Easy

Samuel C. Monson Word Building

William Morris It's Easy to Increase Your Vocabulary

Maxwell Nurnberg and Morris Rosenblum How to Build a Better Vocabulary

F. Earl Ward Spelling and Vocabulary

E. SKIMMING

Skimming is a reading skill that every good reader should possess, since much of the time he does not need to read material comprehensively. Perhaps his purpose is entertainment, or general information, or only general impressions Then he needs an effective skimming method which enables him to deal with the material at 1000 words per minute and faster.

Before a person can hope to become a good skimmer, he has to meet these necessary basic requirements.

1. He must know a great deal about the structure of language.
2. He must be able to identify types of writings: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, character-revealing, etc.
3. He must have a good vocabulary.
4. He must be able to concentrate well.
5. He must have effective visual coordination and mobility.
6. He must be able to anticipate the author's trend of thought and where it is leading.
7. He must be able to recognize key words and phrases.
8. He must be sensitive to clue words such as and, but, or, however, while, as, because, when, etc.
9. He must be able to retain information gathered quickly.
10. He must realize that in skimming not every word must be read.
11. He must acknowledge that good skimming is a skill which requires intensive, frequent practice.

If a person is adequately prepared in all these areas, then and only then, can he hope to read at speeds of several thousand words per minute.

Effective skimming methods will vary in their approach and purpose. If the desire is to preview material as a preliminary step in studying, the reader

should notice all headings, outlining forms, italicized words, summaries, etc., and also read some material under each heading or division. Often this can be the first sentence or two of paragraphs, if the material is written with a topic sentence format.

When the student's purpose is to gain an overall impression or the most important main ideas in a selection, he should skim in a slightly different manner. He will need to utilize typographical aids, of course, but he will also want to read quite a bit of the material. As he reads, he must follow some system--perhaps reading the first two sentences and the last sentence in a paragraph. Longer paragraphs will require more than this. Occasionally, he will skip paragraphs if they seem to be following the same line of thought as a previous paragraph. But two definite parts he must read are the opening paragraph or two and the closing paragraph or two. The opening paragraphs set him on the right course, and the closing paragraphs reveal whether he stayed on that course. If the conclusion of the selection is meaningful to the student and no questionable ideas remain, then he has probably skimmed well.

Looking for the answer to a question or seeking an item of information also requires a skimming or scanning method. Again, the student must be very alert and efficient in those areas listed previously. In addition, he must be able to keep definitely in mind <u>what he is looking for</u>. Then he can move rapidly over the material, using key words to show him if he is in the right area. When he finds the correct area, then he reads until he locates the information he was seeking.

Machines can certainly help a person acquire skimming skills, but there are also methods anyone may use to pace his skimming. He may run his thumb down the edge of the page; he may use his finger as a guide down the center of a column; he may use a zig zag method (back and forth and downward at the same time) with his finger; he may move a card or ruler rapidly down the page;

or he may use anything else that will help keep him moving and remind him not to read all words.

The important factor is not which method he uses, but that he practice whatever works for him. Only constant and intensive practice will enable him to become a proficient skimmer. Skimming cannot be done with a distracted mind or a half-level of attention, but it can be accomplished with a concentrated effort. This is why good skimmers can move up to speeds of 3000, 4000, 5000 words per minute. The attitude, the motivation, the perceptual requirements, and the persistence of the person determine his capabilities.

CHAPTER V: SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

Once a class in reading improvement is completed, a student often neglects to utilize the methods he has learned. If he does not periodically review effective reading techniques and use them whenever they are applicable, he is apt to revert to old and perhaps less efficient habits. The student's reading class should have given him a start on replacing these poor habits with better ones, but, at best, it is only a start. The real task lies ahead--in his day-by-day reading situations and the way he handles them.

In any class-study situation, the student should remember to preview his material as a foundation for the content he needs to comprehend well. Then he should ask questions on the material--really get himself involved as an aid to concentration. After his careful reading, he should always test himself--this reveals how well he really knows the subject. Also, he should not neglect analysis of significant vocabulary. In most subjects, key words will reappear constantly--these he must know. And, last, he should not attempt to push the mind beyond the point where it will accept knowledge. A person should study for short periods of time--really concentrating--then take a break. As he returns to his work refreshed, his assignment should seem easier for him than it would when his mind, eyes, and body were exhausted.

Variety in reading is another factor which the student must consider. He should not limit himself only to the reading for his class assignments. He should read newspapers, magazines, novels--all these help him to keep up with the world around him as a well-informed citizen. He should remember to adjust his reading methods to these other situations since he does not want the same results from all these types of reading. He should skim the newspaper, read a delightful article in a magazine with great speed, and perhaps in reading a novel, skip over some material, read other places rapidly, and

take the time to really savor some meaningful passages.

This flexibility is the key to successful reading. Never should a person say that he reads everything the same way. Rather he should have as many reading methods as he has facial expressions--one for joy, excitement, solemnity, absorption, quiet pleasure, and so many others.

Books reveal centuries of people and entire civilizations in their actions, desires, philosophies, frustrations, successes, pains, accomplishments, traditions. Very little in the history of mankind has remained unchanged. The individual who lives life fully and enjoys it is a flexible creature--so should be his reading.